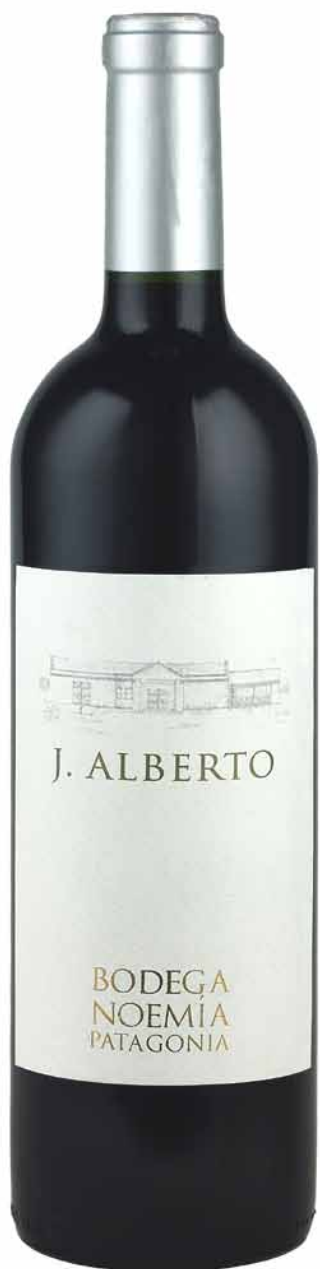


# J. ALBERTO 2009



## *The winemaking*

The winter 2008/09 arrived quite early, it appeared end of May. It was then a very cold, very dry winter with not one drop of rain and quite long. The Spring was warm, with some strong winds. There were hardly any frosts. The summer started as early as in end of October, we skipped half of the Spring. Still no rain. The heat and relentless sun kicked in.

We had to irrigate quite a few times this year as there was still no signs of rain. It was the hottest and driest spell we had seen in Rio-Negro in its recorded history, endless days ranging between 35 and 40 degrees Celsius (95 to 104 F). The nights also remained warm, which is very unusual for our area which normally gets very cold at night. In other words, an extremely unusual year.

The grapes formed hard skins and were small berries, but with the warm nights, the polyphenols didn't ripen as much as we could wish for. Also the sugars went quite high for our area. In other words a year of great luminosity and ripeness.

We began harvest quite early, the 6, 7th of March 2009. The grapes are from our single vineyard planted in 1955 with 95% Malbec pre Phelloxera pied- Franco vines complemented with a 5% Merlot amongst the Malbec vines. We pick both varieties at the same time, this adds to complexity. The grapes were picked in the morning and brought to the winery in a cool truck in order to preserve the "soul" of the grapes. Something we learned from the valley where they grow some of the best pears in the world, the only way to keep them so good: The cold. All the grapes were destemmed by hand at the winery into small 2,500 litre cement vats. The grapes were then cold soaked for 7 days before the indigenous fermentation started, we ferment all our wines on their own yeasts. The alcoholic fermentation lasted 2 weeks, using the "pigeage" or "plunging" method to extract the color and tannins, this is the gentler way to extract in any form of winemaking. This year we noticed very big tannins, thick skins, quite "meaty" grapes.

After the fermentation, the wine was decanted by gravity into 30% new French oak barrels of the finest quality one can get, the remainder 60% into second "wine" or second use barrels (the ones used for the Noemía!) for a period of, this year, 8,5 months. Normally J. Alberto can stay up to 11 months in wood, but this year we found the wine perfect and felt that it was useless leaving it longer in wood. The Malo Lactic also occurred naturally in the same barrels for about 1,5 months. No batonnage.

The wine was racked and blended the 27th and 28th of December 2009, which were both fruit days (by the biodynamic calendar).

The wine was then bottled unfiltered the 4th and 5th of January 2010 which are fruit days in the calendar, also very favourable days.

## *The area*

The estate is situated in Rio Negro Valley, which is 620 miles South of Buenos Aires, 280 miles east of the Andes, 310 miles west of the Atlantic and a further 1240 miles from Tierra del Fuego. In other words, it is located in the middle of the desert. The valley's microclimate is under the influence of two rivers deriving from the Andes, the Neuquen and the Limay which form into the Rio Negro, which throws itself into the Atlantic. The Rio Negro valley is an ex glacier which is 310 miles long and 15,5 miles large at 250 yards above sea level. In 1828, the British colonies, having observed the large amounts of water flowing down the river, decided to create channels which would irrigate the valley thus forming a type of oasis in the middle of the desert.

## *The climate*

The climate is dry. Maximum 30% humidity and 7 inches of rain/year make the area free of diseases. There is no pollution, meaning that there is a high purity of sunlight (great photosynthesis). There is vast thermal amplitude: in maturation season the temperatures are on average 28 grades centigrade at day and 9 grades centigrade at night. The four seasons are very precise; mild spring, hot summer, mild autumn and a cold winter.

## *The vineyard*

The vines were planted in 1955. The grapes are 95% Malbec and 5% Merlot. They are irrigated up to four times a year. A green pruning is effectuated in mid January during veraison thus leaving only 30 hl/acre.

*Our vineyards of Noemía as well as of J. Alberto are both cultivated Bio-Dynamically and are certified by Demeter. On the farm we produce ourselves 7 out of 8 Bio-Dynamic preparations (502,503,504,506,507) with exclusively our own raw material. We also do our own horn manure (500) and Bio-Dynamic composts.*

## *The wine*

J. Alberto is a field blend of 95% Malbec and 5% Merlot with:

- 14% Alcohol
- pH 3,90
- 5,40 g/l of Titratable acidity

***Only 11,000 bottles and 35 Magnums were produced.***

NB. As the wine is a 100% natural and unfiltered; it may present some harmless deposits in the bottle.

***Bodega Noemia de Patagonia S.A.***  
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